

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 6, 2013

*Background notes for Monday, September 9th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

Chairman Mike Retzky and Board of Selectmen Vice Chairman John Bulian will interview the candidates for the open seat on the Park and Recreation Commission. They will make a recommendation to a joint meeting of the Commission and Selectmen on Tuesday, September 17th. A majority vote of both boards is required for the appointment. The appointed member will serve until the April 2014 Town election, at which time the person elected will serve a full three-year term. The appointed member is eligible to run for election, but is not considered an incumbent.

PROJECT LIST

I put together an update on a variety of projects that I'm working on, to help with the discussions on the agenda.

RAIL TRAIL PUBLIC HEARING

The Selectmen are scheduling a public hearing on the possible rail trail. It is expected to be on Tuesday, September 17th. I will provide additional information when it is available.

FOOD TRUCKS

The Selectmen are holding a public hearing on Tuesday, September 10 at 7:05 PM regarding a possible new policy for food trucks. A copy of the draft policy is on the Commission's agenda for discussion.

BEGINNING OF FALL SEASON

Without taking much of a break, we are transitioning from summer programs over to fall programs. Registration began on Wednesday, September 4th.

The fall athletic fields opened for the season on September 1st, over the Labor Day weekend. DPW did numerous maintenance tasks in the weeks prior to the fall season, so that all were in good condition for the expected heavy use.

I'm working with several departments to bring the work related to capital projects funded at the May Town Meeting. The funding becomes available after July 1st, but it is difficult for me to spend too much quality time on the planning and procurement until later in the summer. We're also working on updating the 5 year capital request plan, as that paperwork is due in October. I'm also working with other Town departments on a few town-wide purchasing contracts.

NEW ENGLAND PARKS ASSOCIATION

I will be attending the annual fall conference of the New England Parks Association from September 11-September 13th.

NEWMAN PRE-SCHOOL SURFACING

This project was funded at the May Town Meeting, so once the funds were available, we got the project out to bid in July. DPW Supervisor of Administration Carys Lustig worked with me to quickly move the contract award through the process quickly, but the contractor delayed the return of the signed documents, so was not able to complete the work by August 30th, a contract requirement discussed with him prior to the award. He has worked this week, around the school schedule and religious holiday, and it is hoped the final surface work will be completed over the weekend, so that the Pre-School has full use on Monday. The Pre-School did not open until Friday, September 6th, so if all goes well with the revised plan, they will only have missed one day of use on the playground.

CLICKFIX

The DPW became a member of a regional program called ClickFix. People can send in questions or concerns that need to be dealt with from their computers or smart phones. <http://seeclickfix.com/needham> If you go to the link, you can see a sampling of issues that have been reported and you can register to become a contributor. Over Labor Day weekend, there were quite a few regarding flooding!

DeFAZIO FIELD LIGHTS

Needham experienced a few lightning strikes over Labor Day weekend, and it appears one of the light poles at DeFazio surged, burning out the connector for that pole. The problem was discovered on Monday night and MUSCO repaired the issue on Wednesday.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

There are two proposals that have been submitted for review by the CPC for the Fall Special Town Meeting. One is from the Conservation Commission for construction funds for some trail projects at Ridge Hill. The second is for the purchase of insurance for the proposed rail trail. The CPC has determined that both projects are eligible for CPA funding, but will discuss the timing of the requests at their September 11th meeting, and determine whether to support the review of the proposals for the November Special Town Meeting or wait until the May Annual Town Meeting. The Selectmen currently intend to request acceptance of the Rail Trail lease agreement with the MBTA at the November Special Town Meeting.

MITCHELL SCHOOL

The School Committee and Permanent Public Building Committee are gathering information on the possibility of locating some modular classrooms at the Mitchell School for the interim period prior to a major construction project. The current schematic would locate the modulares in the area of the basketball court, and includes the cost of moving the basketball court to the other side of the playground.

THE NEW SENIOR CENTER

It's exciting!! Everything appears to be ready for the official move of the Stephen Palmer Senior Center to 300 Hillside Avenue under the new name of *Center at the Heights* in mid-October. The packing will begin during the first week in October, so things will be a bit chaotic at the center in preparation for the move – and for a short while after the move is complete. Assistant Director Karen Peirce will keep all program participants up-to-date during the temporary disruption.
